

In the Claims

Please cancel claim 1. Please add new claims 15–34 as follows:

1 15. A filter element comprising:

- (a) inner and outer, spaced cylindrical, liners having first and second ends;
 - (i) said inner liner defining an open, cylindrical internal volume;
- (b) filter media positioned between said inner and outer, spaced, cylindrical liners;
- (c) first and second end caps;
 - (i) each one of said first and second end caps comprising soft, compressible, polyurethane foam;
 - (ii) said first ends of said inner and outer, spaced, cylindrical liners being embedded in said first end cap;
 - (iii) said second ends of said inner and outer, spaced, cylindrical liners being embedded in said second end cap; and,
- (d) a plastic insert having a plurality of radially outwardly directed feet projecting therefrom;
 - (i) said insert being positioned with said radially outwardly directed feet being oriented adjacent said first end of said inner cylindrical liner and at least partially underneath said first end cap; and
 - (ii) said insert further being positioned with a circular perimeter portion thereof supported by said plurality of feet to project into said open internal volume defined by said inner cylindrical liner.

2 16. A filter element according to claim 15 wherein:

- (a) said first end cap has an annular sealing region thereon; said annular sealing region comprising said soft, compressible polyurethane foam and having at least first and second stepped portions;
 - (A) said first stepped portion having an outermost dimension smaller than an outermost dimension of said second stepped portion.

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A filter element according to claim 15 wherein:

(a) said insert includes a surface portion with at least one free rise aperture extending therethrough.

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A filter element according to claim 17 wherein:

(a) said insert surface portion includes a plurality of free rise apertures extending therethrough.

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A filter element according to claim 18 wherein:

(a) each one of said feet is secured to said circular perimeter portion of said insert by a flexible leg section.

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A filter element according to claim 19 wherein:

(a) said filter media includes an extension of pleated cellulose fiber media.

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A filter element according to claim 19 wherein:

(a) said insert defines a central aperture; said central aperture in said insert being smaller in diameter than a diameter of said inner liner.

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A filter element according to claim 21 wherein:

(a) an internal diameter of the inner liner within the range of 6-8.5 inches.

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A filter element according to claim 19 wherein:

(a) said feet are evenly, radially, spaced in projection outwardly from said circular perimeter portion of said insert.

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A filter element according to claim 19 wherein:

(a) said first endcap includes a stepped, radially sealing, portion thereon.

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11 25. A filter element according to claim 10 including:

(a) a plurality of standing ribs extending from said surface portion.

12 26. A filter element according to claim 25 wherein:

(a) each of said ribs extend from said circular perimeter portion toward a central aperture in said insert.

27. A filter assembly comprising:

(a) a filter element; said filter element having an extension of media and a first end cap at a first end of said extension of media;

(i) said first end cap having an annular sealing region thereon; said annular sealing region comprising a soft, compressible polymeric material and having at least first and second stepped portions;

(A) said first stepped portion having an outermost dimension smaller than an outermost dimension of said second stepped portion;

(ii) said filter element first end cap including a rigid portion aligned with said first end cap annular sealing region;

(b) a housing; said housing including an outer surrounding wall having a first end and a first segment; said first segment:

(i) being spaced from and parallel to said outer surrounding wall;

(ii) being supporting by said outer surrounding wall in projection outwardly from said outer surrounding wall first end; and

(iii) having a rigid, inner, annular, sealing region;

(c) said filter element being removably oriented within said housing; said first and second stepped portions of said first end cap annular sealing region being compressed against said first segment inner annular sealing region to form a radial seal therewith and positioned between said end cap rigid portion and said first segment inner annular sealing region.

28. A filter assembly according to claim 27 including:

(a) an inner liner embedded in said first end cap and supporting said extension of media; and

(b) a plastic insert having a plurality of radially outwardly directed feet projecting therefrom;

(i) said insert being positioned with said radially outwardly directed feet being oriented adjacent to a first end of said inner liner and at least partially underneath said first end cap; and

(ii) said insert further being positioned with a perimeter portion thereof supported by said plurality of feet to project into an open internal volume defined by said inner liner.

29. A filter assembly according to claim 27 wherein:

(a) said sealing region of said first end cap includes a third stepped portion; said outermost dimension of said second stepped portion being smaller than an outermost dimension of said second stepped portion.

30. A filter assembly according to claim 29 wherein:

(a) said sealing region of said first end cap comprises foamed polyurethane; and

(b) said first end cap rigid portion is parallel to said outer surrounding wall.

31. A filter assembly according to claim 30 wherein:

(a) said outer surrounding wall comprises metal; and

(b) said first end cap rigid portion comprises metal.

32. A filter assembly according to claim 31 wherein:

(a) said first end cap rigid portion comprises an outer support liner.

33. A filter assembly according to claim 32 further including:

(a) a second end cap at a second end of said extension of media; said outer support liner extending between said first and second end caps; and